



# Fairbanks North Star Borough Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Final Draft

July 14, 2022

Interior Delegation

# The Project Team



## **FNSB Economic Development Commission**

Mayor Bryce Ward · Abigail Riggs · Frank Tomaszewski  
Kristan Kelly · Mark Billingsley · Paul Robinson · Russell Talvi

**Past Members:** Deb Hickok, Matt Cooper, Mike Meeks, Mindy O'Neill

**Project Manager:** Brittany Smart

## **Contracting Team:**

Shelly Wade, AICP  
Molly Mylius



Supporting team  
members:



# CEDS Mini Refresher Course

# Project Purpose

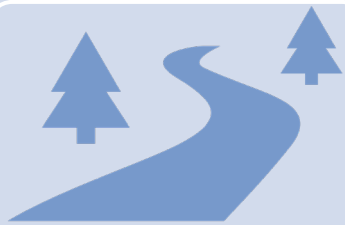
Develop a new Five-Year FNSB Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).



CEDS must go through a robust update every five years, with shorter, less intensive annual updates.



# What is a CEDS?



A locally-based, regionally driven economic development roadmap that guides government and community action.



Brings the private and public sector together to develop a regional strategy and action plan



Robust update every five years with less intensive annual updates



Makes recommendations to support business, create more and better paying jobs, improve quality of life, and increase resilience

## Includes:

Data

SWOT &  
Situational  
Assessment

Economic Vision

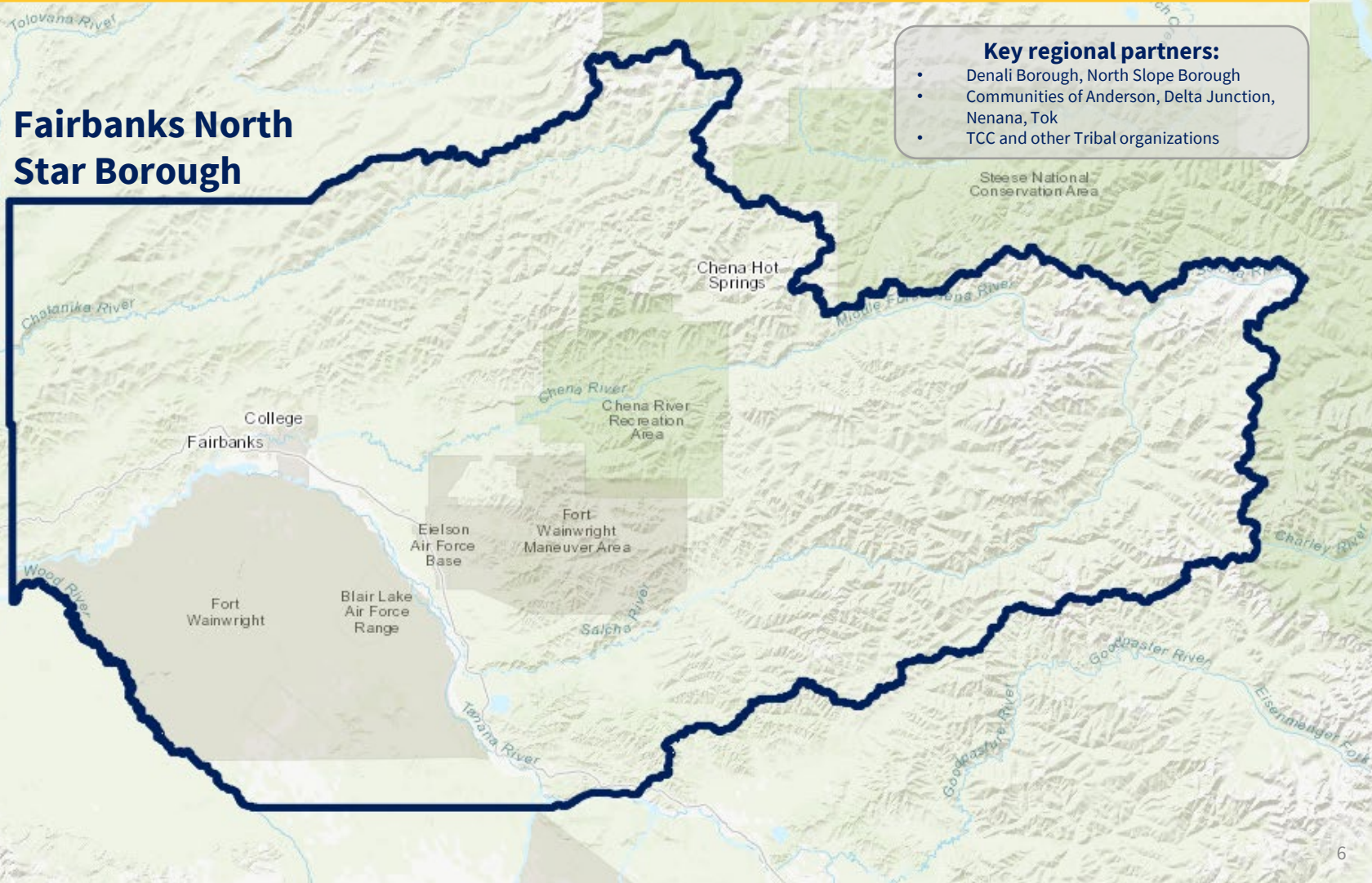
Goals, Objectives,  
and Strategies

Action Plan

# Project Area

## Fairbanks North Star Borough

- Key regional partners:**
- Denali Borough, North Slope Borough
  - Communities of Anderson, Delta Junction, Nenana, Tok
  - TCC and other Tribal organizations



# Authority – Why FNSB?

## FNSB Economic Development Commission is the State-designated ARDOR

ARDORs develop customized work plans that contain goals, objectives, and strategies for addressing regional economic development needs including:

- Facilitating development of a healthy regional economy that results in sustainable business growth, new business investment, and economic diversification.
- Identifying and working to eliminate regional economic development barriers.
- **Developing and implementing a comprehensive economic development strategy.**
- Coordinating regional planning efforts that result in new employment and business opportunities.
- Working to enable multiple communities to collaborate and pool limited resources.
- Strengthening partnerships with public, private, and non-government organizations.
- Providing technical assistance to encourage business startup, retention, and expansion.



# Project Timeline

	2021										2022					
	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	→
<b>Project Website</b>	•	← ongoing website updates →														Adoption →
<b>Stakeholder Interviews</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						
<b>Interactive Discussions</b>	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•						
<b>Community Events</b>			Midnight Sun, Golden Days, Fair													
<b>Economic Summit</b>											•					
<b>E-Newsletters, Social Media, Public Notices, News, Radio</b>										•	•		•		•	
<b>Key Phases</b>	<i>Project Kickoff</i>		<i>Research &amp; Events, Interviews</i>				<i>Draft Vision &amp; Goals</i>			<i>Economic Summit</i>		<i>Public Review Draft</i>			<i>Final CEDS</i>	→

We are here

# Public Engagement

- Website – [fnsbceds.com](https://fnsbceds.com)
- Booths at Community Events (2021)  
Midnight Sun Festival · Golden Days Street Fair · Tanana Valley State Fair
- Industry and Sector-Specific Roundtables
- Economic Development Commission Meetings
- One-on-one Interviews
- Public Presentations
- Coordination with other planning efforts
- Interior Alaska Economic Summit
- Draft CEDS – Public Comment Period





What'd We Learn?

# Public Review Draft Outreach

- Email distribution via mailing list  
3 emails sent to 500+ contacts
- Targeted industry / cluster emails
- Targeted phone calls to key partners  
Including Tribal contacts and the FNSB School District
- FNSB Website homepage spotlight
- FNSB social media
- Fairbanks Daily News Miner coverage



# Level of Engagement

*In over a decade of economic development and CEDS planning experience across Alaska and the Lower 48, **I have never seen the level of engagement we've had with the FNSB community and their partners.** The community has shown up!*

*At every step of the process, a diverse group of residents, businesses, and community leaders have provided valuable feedback to the FNSB CEDS and the Borough / Interior AK's economic future. **Never has our team seen the level of commitment to action and economic resiliency, with almost every industry, non-profit, and agency partner volunteering to lead CEDS actions.***

*No doubt, this level of dedication and community pride will be key to ensuring **the community's vision as the economic hub for Interior Alaska and the gateway to Alaska's Arctic, where dreams and opportunities thrive for everyone.***

Shelly Wade, AICP

Principal::Owner, Agnew::Beck Consulting

FNSB CEDS Consultant Team (and proud NPHS & UAF Graduate 😊)

# Overall Comments – Positive!

I see your draft CEDS update is posted online, congratulations on a very comprehensive document!

Sums up many of the issues facing the FNSB for a prosperous, healthy community in the next five years.

The 2022 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is very thorough and ambitious. If all the Strategies and Actions were accomplished in the next five years, Fairbanks would be an incredible place!

I'm very impressed with the May revision of the FNSB Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. You and the contract team have done a nice job of incorporating community input.

The draft is clear and concise in an easy-to-read format. Each section is well highlighted and outlined with strategies and actions that are well organized and realistic.

# General Comments

- **70+** individual or organizations commenters, resulting in **500+** specific comments
- General concerns:
  - Climate adaptation underrepresented
  - Equity/sector and group representation
  - Volume of actions – need to prioritize and better connect to other planning efforts
- Cross-Sector concerns:
  - Access to affordable, quality childcare
  - Available workforce
  - Supply chain
- Most commented sectors:
  - Agriculture
  - Energy
  - Mining
  - Military
- Demonstration of Plan Ownership
  - Volunteering as lead or support organization to implement action plan



# Comment Tracking

- Posted on project website: [fnsbceds.com](https://fnsbceds.com)
- Transparency & accountability

## Appendix K: Public Comment Summary

*group/coalition comments presented first, sorted by focus area, followed by individual/business comments by focus area*

FNSBC CEDS - Public Comment Database, May-June 2022			
Organization/Coalition Comments (sorted by focus area)			
Group	Focus Area	Comment	Proposed Resolution
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition	Agriculture	Missing: Agriculture: safeguards to prioritize local growers and communities and incentivize small scale ecological farming, not industrial agricultural practices	Expanded action a under Support Farmers to mention ecological farming practices.
Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition	Agriculture	We would like to offer additional action steps. Please feel free to reach out for additional details or clarification: Agriculture Strategy #1: Promote Local – Promote locally grown agriculture products. f. Expand access to traditional land owners in developing farming lands across the Interior e. Support and expand community gardening initiatives  Agriculture Strategy #2: Recruit Workers – Educate, train, and support new farmers and agricultural workers. e. Support Stone Soup Cafe training programs and community garden infrastructure  Agriculture Strategy #5: Food Security – Increase local food storage capacity. c. Uplift the the importance of subsistence hunting and promote traditional food storage methodologies d. Identify and protect lands and waters that are particularly important for subsistence	Proposed strategy 1 action f added as a future idea for consideration  Added community gardening initiative action.  Added Stone Soup Café to the list of supporters in the action plan Strategy 4 action a.  Added a subsistence action to Strategy #5.

## Appendix K: Public Comment Summary

# General Comments – Resolution

- Climate change adaptation added throughout  
Now featured in half the sector summaries
- Ensured cross-sector topics were connected throughout
- Expanded summary background appendix to include poverty rates by population and distribution of household income

- Strategies are presented in order of importance by sector
  - Many top priorities include capital projects
  - FNSB will further analyze a subset of the capital projects for economic impact and funding opportunities

Figure 14: Poverty Rates by Select Socioeconomic Characteristics, 2019

	Fairbanks North Star Borough	Municipality of Anchorage	Kenai Peninsula Borough	Matanuska-Susitna Borough	Alaska
<b>Total Poverty Level</b>	8.00%	9.00%	12.10%	10.30%	10.70%
<b>BY AGE</b>					
Under 18 years	10.20%	13.10%	15.20%	12.20%	14.80%
18 to 64 years	7.60%	8.10%	12.40%	10.00%	9.90%
65 years and over	5.00%	5.50%	6.70%	7.20%	5.90%
<b>BY SEX</b>					
Male	6.80%	8.40%	11.50%	9.70%	10.10%
Female	9.30%	9.70%	12.70%	10.90%	11.30%
<b>BY RACE</b>					
White	6.90%	5.50%	11.10%	9.90%	7.20%
Black or African American	8.30%	16.10%	21.80%	13.70%	14.20%
American Indian & Alaska Native	13.30%	21.20%	20.90%	12.90%	24.00%
Asian	5.50%	13.20%	12.80%	13.60%	10.70%
Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander	8.20%	21.80%	3.50%	29.60%	20.60%
Some other race	5.50%	13.30%	3.90%	5.90%	10.10%
Two or more races	14.50%	9.80%	15.80%	11.10%	11.60%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2015-2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

# Final Economic Vision



FNSB is the economic hub for Interior Alaska and the gateway to Alaska's Arctic, where dreams and opportunities thrive for everyone.

# Refined Economic Focus Areas

## Industry Clusters

*economic drivers*

Agriculture

Energy

Forestry

Health Care

Mining

Military ★

Research & Innovation

Tourism ★



## Community Influencers

*supportive economic foundations*

Business Development & Entrepreneurship

Communications

Education & Workforce Development

Recreation, Retail, & Entertainment ★

Other (Land Use, Housing, Environment, Transportation)



# Agriculture

1. Increase Food Security
2. Support Farmers
3. Promote Local Agriculture
4. Recruit Workers
5. Protect Farmland

## **Community Response:**

- Subsistence needs to be better reflected
- Food security and supporting farmers should be top priority
- Various changes recommended to the action plan

## **Final Draft Change:**

- Added subsistence throughout
- Reorganized section to align with priorities
- Updated action plan



# Energy

1. Renewables
2. Energy Efficiency
3. Innovation
4. Resilient Power Grid
5. Expand Natural Gas Infrastructure
6. Increase Collaboration

Reword objective:

*Interior Alaska will be a hub for piloting innovative, adaptive, resilient solutions to [climate change impacts](#) and unique cold climate energy challenges.*

## **Community Response:**

- *More focus on renewables, with more ambitious targets*
- *Some opposition to natural gas & nuclear expansion*

## **Final Draft Change:**

- *Reorganize strategies*
- *Elevate energy efficiency from an action to a strategy*
- *Add climate change to the objectives and throughout section*
- *Did not change 5-year renewable energy targets*



# Military

1. Strengthen Arctic Defense and Training
2. Sustain FNSB as a Location of Choice
3. Protect the Environment

## **Community Response:**

- Add military as standalone sector

## **Final Draft Change:**

- Created new sector
- Maintained icons throughout

**Strategies & Actions** – Activities we will implement over the next five years to accomplish objectives & targets.  
See Chapter 3 for a detailed action plan.

Icon Key:  Capital Project  Military-related

Photo Credit: SSgt Danielle Sukhlall, courtesy of Defense Visual Information Distribution Service



# Mining

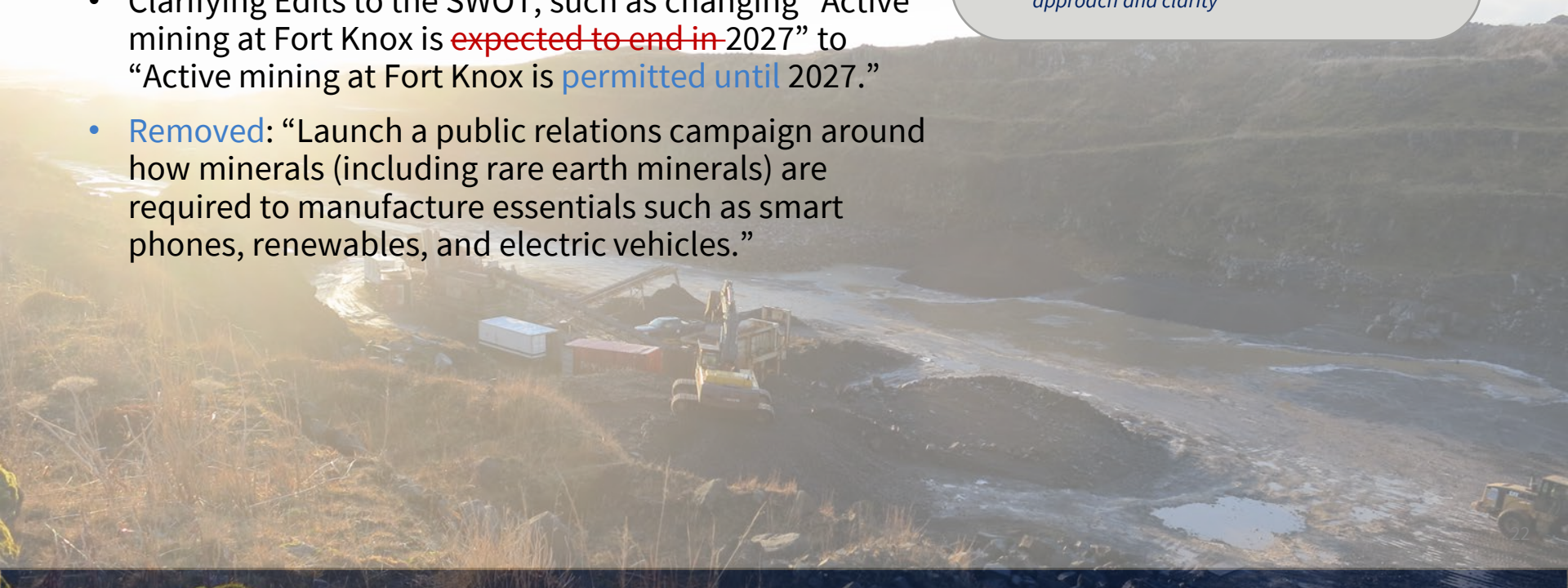
1. Ensure Fair Policies
  2. Expand Outreach Efforts
  3. Prioritize Workforce Development
  4. Increase Production and Value-Added Processing
- Clarifying Edits to the SWOT, such as changing “Active mining at Fort Knox is ~~expected to end in~~ 2027” to “Active mining at Fort Knox is **permitted until** 2027.”
  - **Removed:** “Launch a public relations campaign around how minerals (including rare earth minerals) are required to manufacture essentials such as smart phones, renewables, and electric vehicles.”

## **Community Response:**

- Concern of impacts to neighborhoods, communities, and environment

## **Final Draft Change:**

- Reorganized strategies
- Added “Fair Policies” as priority #1
- Refined language to ensure balanced approach and clarity



# Ideas for Future Consideration

Some Examples:

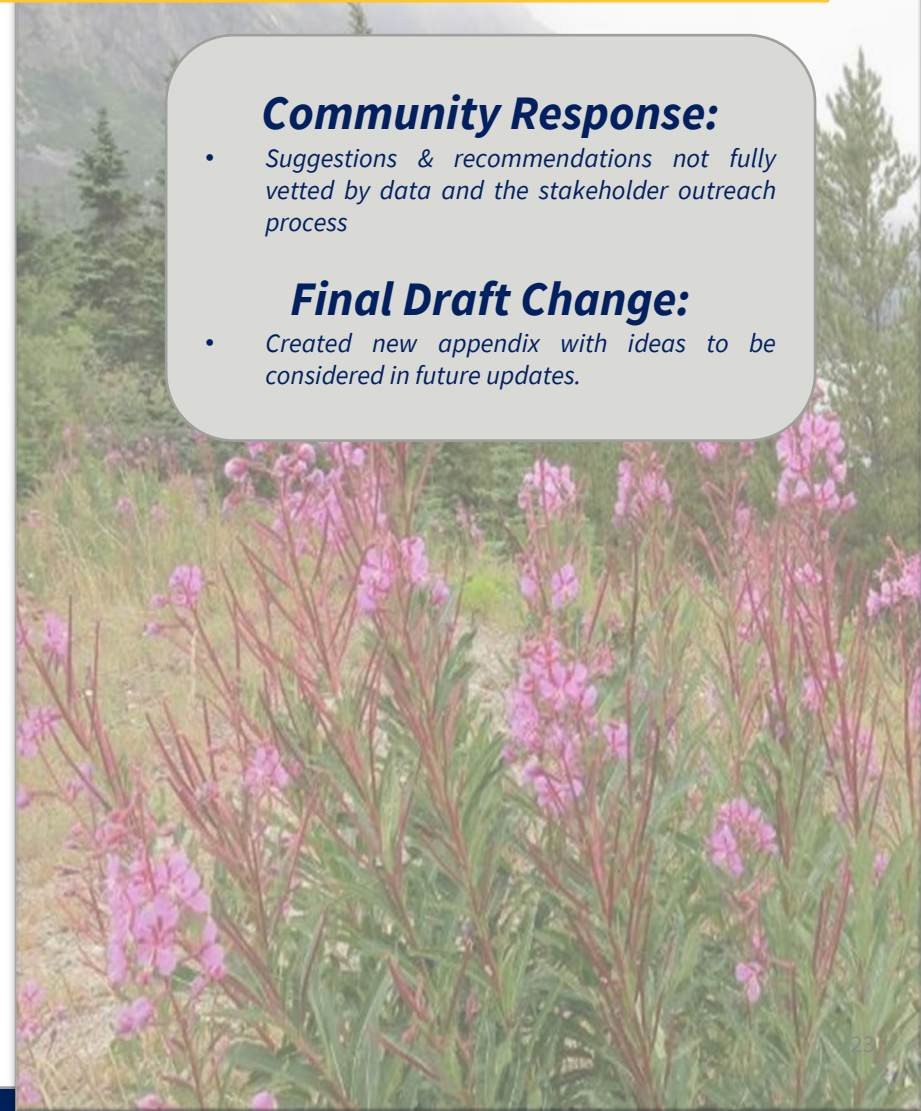
- **General:** Expand use of diversity measures to better identify and address economy disparities in wealth, resources, and ownership
- **Agriculture:** Offer tax reductions for fuel use in agriculture
- **Energy:** Explore development and export of hydrogen
- **Forestry:** Purchase a biochar reactor and make it available to rent
- **Health Care:** create a greenhouse gas monitoring program
- **Mining:** Establish Fairbanks as a center for critical & rare earth ore development and processing
- **Small Business Development & Entrepreneurship:** Evaluate need for a Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) in Interior AK
- **Other:** Conduct a climate vulnerability assessment
- And more...

## **Community Response:**

- *Suggestions & recommendations not fully vetted by data and the stakeholder outreach process*

## **Final Draft Change:**

- *Created new appendix with ideas to be considered in future updates.*





# What's Next?

# Next Steps - Adoption

~~June 20 — Final Draft Released~~

~~June 28 — Economic Development Commission  
• Recommendation to the Assembly~~ 

July 28 – FNSB Assembly Introduction  
• Refer to Planning Commission

TBD – Planning Commission   
• Recommendation to the Assembly

TBD – FNSB Assembly Adoption  
• Public Hearing 

*Comp Plan  
Or  
Not to Comp Plan?*

*That is the question...*

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*Administration is  
recommending to NOT  
adopt the CEDS as an  
element of the FNSB  
Regional  
Comprehensive Plan*

# Capital Projects – Economic Impact

- I/O Economic Impact Modeling
  - 3 projects completed (on website)
  - 5 additional projects (TBD)
- Prioritization determined by:
  - Amount of input
  - Available data (\$)
  - Lead/partner identified
- Tool to inform CODEL, Interior Delegation, funding partners, etc.

Provides critical information in potential jobs and revenue/business that will be generated
- CEDS process demonstrates projects:
  - Fit into an overall plan/vision for the community
  - Public support



# Action Plan

The action plans consider existing and anticipated resources and provide direction to FNSB leadership, staff, regional organizations, businesses, and partners. Each action plan includes the following:

**Capital Project:** Identifies whether the action includes an infrastructure or facility component. This is especially relevant considering the extensive current and anticipated federal funding opportunities available that could support implementation of capital projects.

**Lead:** The lead organization responsible for the action.

**Support:** Partners, allies, and other entities that can support implementation.

Example (from Energy action plan)

Capital Project?	Action	Lead	Support	Estimated Resources	Target Completion
✓	a. Invest in electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure. Learn more about current efforts at the Alaska Energy Authority (AEA)'s Alaska Electric Vehicle Working Group page <a href="#">here</a> .	Alaska Energy Authority	Golden Valley Electric Association, Alaska Electric Vehicle Association, UAF Alaska Center for Energy and Power, FNSB, Fairbanks Climate Action Coalition, state agencies, electric vehicle drivers and industry representatives	EV fast-charging network phase 1: \$1.52 M (Kenai Peninsula to Fairbanks)	Phase 1: Summer 2022

**Actions:** Near-term steps that organizations, businesses, and partners can take to help move a strategy forward.

**Estimated Resources:** Estimated costs to implement the action steps over the next five years, when identified.

**Target Completion:** Estimated year when the action will be complete.

# Implementation & Annual Updates

- Usability through design:
  - Standalone sections
- Measuring Success
  - Each section includes metrics and targets
  - CRQ – [fnsb.gov/crq](https://fnsb.gov/crq)
  - Interactive Dashboards – *in progress*
- Economic Summit
  - Analyze progress
  - Note items completed
  - Update goals & strategies
  - Review & update targets

## Where We Are

(2019 as pre-pandemic baseline)

What measurements can we use to track progress?  
Where do we want to be in 5 years?

**2027  
Targets**



# Thank you!



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